

# *ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR WASHINGTON STATE*

Public opinion drove the definition of important environmental values and focused attention to the proposed Forest Legacy Area.

The Department solicited the opinion of natural resource agency representatives, environmental and land trust organizations, Native American tribes, industrial and non-industrial forest landowners, land use planners, and the Stewardship Coordinating Committee. In addition, the draft Assessment of Need was publicized and made available to the general public.

## Important Values

When asked about a number of environmental values, and asked to rank their importance to the Washington State Forest Legacy Program, the public indicated protection of water quality as their number one priority. Retaining forested lands for present and/or future timber production was second priority. Protecting wildlife, including fish, habitat and conserving forested lands that provide habitat for unique, sensitive, threatened, or endangered species followed. These values were ranked well above the other possible choices.

The State Stewardship Coordinating Committee recognized these values as having the most importance for the state program. The Committee believes these values are not mutually exclusive. They recommended to the State Forester that a parcel must offer these important values in order to qualify for the program:

parcel must contribute to protecting water quality

parcel must have present or future timber management opportunities

parcel must provide habitat for fish, other wildlife and/or important plant communities

## Forest Legacy Area Eligibility Criteria

Public opinion showed overwhelming support for a Forest Legacy Area in King, Snohomish and Pierce Counties. This is the state's most populated area, which continues to experience a high rate of conversion of forest land to non-forest uses.

Public comment indicated that Forest Legacy Area boundaries should be defined by natural rather than political boundaries. The State Stewardship Coordinating Committee recommended using the Stillaguamish River watershed to mark the northern boundary and the Nisqually River watershed to mark the southern boundary. In order to honor watershed integrity, parts of Skagit and Thurston Counties are included in the proposed Forest Legacy Area.

All five counties within the proposed Forest Legacy Area are currently planning in accordance with the Growth Management Act of 1990, which requires counties that are experiencing rapid population growth to designate urban growth area boundaries and resource lands of long-term commercial significance. The 'rural' lands between these two zones are commonly known as rural transition land. The State Stewardship Coordinating Committee recommended this rural transition zone within King, Snohomish, Pierce and parts of Skagit and Thurston Counties as the proposed Forest Legacy Area.

### **Parcel Acquisition Eligibility Criteria**

The Department, in cooperation with the Statewide Stewardship Coordinating Committee, willing landowners, County planners, natural resource professionals and the general public, will identify parcels within the Puget Sound Corridor Forest Legacy Area, for possible program acquisition. Willing landowners will be encouraged to self-evaluate their property for program inclusion using the following evaluation criteria. Parcels must offer water quality protection, timber management opportunity and habitat for fish, other wildlife and/or important plant species or communities.

Landowners will be asked to submit a self-evaluation of their property. Parcels that stand out as having prime potential for the Legacy Program will be further reviewed through site visits and/or presentations. An evaluation committee will be formed. The same committee should evaluate a number of parcels and recommend them, in order of desirability, to the State Stewardship Coordinating Committee, who will then be responsible for making recommendations to the State Forester. Ultimate parcel approval rests with the US Department of Agriculture Forest Service.

The following evaluation criteria "checklist" will be used by the evaluation committee to narrow the field of parcel candidates to those meriting further investigation for inclusion in the program. In addition to the resource criteria, long-term manageability of the easement will be considered when prioritizing parcels for easement acquisition. Manageability criteria include proximity to other lands managed by a local unit of government, size, ease of locating on the ground, access, etc.

## FOREST LEGACY PROGRAM PARCEL EVALUATION CRITERIA

Note: The Stewardship Coordinating Committee has said they do not support a numerical ranking system for evaluating potential Forest Legacy parcels. The following are a list of statements/questions that can be answered yes or no. The intention of these questions are to make a first cut of nominated parcels. Questions should be thorough enough so that the parcels most desirable for this program "float" to the top.

Is the parcel within Forest Legacy Area boundaries?  
(see Forest Legacy Map and Description)

\_\_\_\_ YES \_\_\_\_ NO

*The primary purpose of the Washington State Forest Legacy Program is to protect traditional uses on forest land threatened by conversion to non-forest use (such as housing or commercial development). Are the following goals consistent with your plans for your property:*

Protect or enhance water quality in the immediate vicinity or downstream?

\_\_\_\_ YES \_\_\_\_ NO

Provide important habitat for fish, other wildlife or plant species?

\_\_\_\_ YES \_\_\_\_ NO

Provide present or future timber management opportunities?

\_\_\_\_ YES \_\_\_\_ NO

If you answered "no" to any of the above questions, this property will not qualify for the Washington State Forest Legacy Program. If property qualifies, please answer the following questions to the best of your ability. Answering "no" to the following questions will not prevent your property from being considered for the Program.

Do you plan to maintain your land for forest uses for the next...

\_\_\_\_ One to five years

\_\_\_\_ Six to ten years

\_\_\_\_ 11 to twenty years

\_\_\_\_ 20 years or more

Are there any current constraints on the parcel that protect it from being converted to non-forest use, such as state or federal regulations, zoning, deed restrictions, current conservation easements, etc.?

\_\_\_\_ YES \_\_\_\_ NO

Do any parties other than the landowner(s) have any rights to resources on your property? (i.e. mineral, timber, right-of-way, water)

\_\_\_\_ YES \_\_\_\_ NO

Is your property enrolled in one of the following tax classifications? Check those that apply:

\_\_\_\_ classified timber land

\_\_\_\_ designated timber land

\_\_\_\_ open space

Is there an approved Forest Stewardship Plan for this property?

\_\_\_\_ YES \_\_\_\_ NO

If not, are you willing to have a Forest Stewardship Plan written?

\_\_\_\_ YES \_\_\_\_ NO

Is there any other type of written management plan?

\_\_\_\_ YES \_\_\_\_ NO

#### WATER QUALITY

Are any of the following on or adjacent to your property?  
Check all that apply:

\_\_\_\_ stream/river

\_\_\_\_ spring

\_\_\_\_ lake/pond

\_\_\_\_ saltwater

\_\_\_\_ domestic drinking water

\_\_\_\_ forested wetland

\_\_\_\_ non-forested wetland

#### WILDLIFE

Is your property adjacent to any public lands, or other land which is permanently protected from conversion to non-forest use? If yes, please give name of park, forest, etc.

\_\_\_\_ YES \_\_\_\_ NO

\_\_\_\_\_

Does your property provide a habitat corridor between large forested ownerships?

\_\_\_\_ YES \_\_\_\_ NO

Does your property provide protected access to a riparian area?

\_\_\_\_ YES \_\_\_\_ NO

Does your property provide an accessible source of drinking water for wildlife?

\_\_\_\_ YES \_\_\_\_ NO

Do you know of any rare wildlife species that occur on your property?

\_\_\_\_ YES \_\_\_\_ NO

### FISHERIES

Do any of the following occur on your property? Check all that apply:

\_\_\_\_ salmon/steelhead/trout

\_\_\_\_ shellfish

\_\_\_\_ other saltwater fish

### PLANT COMMUNITIES

Are there any areas of your property that are practically undisturbed by human impact?

\_\_\_\_ YES \_\_\_\_ NO

Do you have the following species or vegetation types on your property? Check all that apply:

\_\_\_\_ western white pine

\_\_\_\_ Douglas fir and hardwoods

\_\_\_\_ ponderosa pine

\_\_\_\_ western hemlock and hardwoods

\_\_\_\_ Oregon white oak

\_\_\_\_ mixed conifers and hardwoods

\_\_\_\_ Oregon ash

\_\_\_\_ remnant of prairie

\_\_\_\_ cottonwood

\_\_\_\_ alder

### TIMBER MANAGEMENT OPPORTUNITY

Estimate percent of forested acres:

\_\_\_\_\_ % less than 20 years old

\_\_\_\_\_ % 20 - 60 years old

\_\_\_\_\_ % over 60 years old

Has timber been commercially harvested from this property with the last 30 years?

\_\_\_\_\_ YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO

Does your property share a boundary with any lands that will be managed for present or future timber production on a long-term basis?

\_\_\_\_\_ YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO

Is there road access to the property?

\_\_\_\_\_ YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO

### CULTURAL RESOURCES

Do you know of any cultural resources on your property?

\_\_\_\_\_ YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO

Describe:

### ARCHEOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Are there known archeological resources on the site?

\_\_\_\_\_ YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO

Describe:

### GEOLOGIC FEATURES

Are there important or unusual geologic features on the site?

\_\_\_\_\_ YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO

Describe:

## SCENIC RESOURCES

Can the property be viewed from the following areas? Check all that apply:

- ☐ county road
- ☐ state highway
- ☐ interstate roadway
- ☐ saltwater
- ☐ within a city
- ☐ other